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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Brown Coal Mines at Konin: Location/Background/Briquet
Factory/Mean of Transportation/Electrical Power/Labor/
Other Industries

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Location

"The coal basin is located northeast of Konin on the right bank of the Warta River. Strictly speaking, the coal fields are located between the two small localities of Wieszluz in the south and Maliniec in the north. The fields stretch from the Konin-Slesin highway toward the east, covering mostly moors. Toward the east, the fields are still being expanded."

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Background

"Before World War II, exploitation of the Konin brown coal basin had already started on a limited scale. During the German occupation, the whole enterprise was rebuilt and expanded to a large extent. At the same time, a briquet factory was built on the area at the western end of the fields. The entire coal mine enterprise was somewhat damaged during the Soviet offensive in the winter of 1945. However, all these damages have now been repaired."

Briquet Factory

"During 1946 and 1947 a new part was added to the briquet factory. It is said that in this new part the chemical processing of brown coal is in operation."

"The excavation of the brown coal is done by the open-laying method (odkrywkowo)."

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Means of Transportation

"The coalfields are connected with the main railway line by a special sidetrack which goes north to the Goslawice factory. Another means of transportation is the narrow-gauge railway line which goes from Konin as far north as Sepolno, stopping at several points along the way. Two concrete bridges were rebuilt after the war to enable this narrow-gauge railway to cross the Warta-Goplo Canal.

"The fields have one other good means of transportation at their disposal and that is the Morzyslawski Canal, part of a canal system between the Warta River and the Goplo Lake which was constructed shortly before World War II. This water-route is still in full-length operation and is quite well maintained.

"There is a rope-railway in operation within the coal basin itself which connects the eastern end of the fields with the briquet factory. Only one connection of this kind is in existence at the present.

Electrical Power

"North of the coal fields between the localities of Malyniec and Goslawice, a huge electrical power plant is now under construction. The work is still not completed, but it is anticipated that the plant will start its activities either this year [1953] or at the latest next year [1954]. Up to now, the coal mines have gotten the necessary power through the high tension net which extends across the southern part of the area, crosses the coal fields and ends at the Goslawice sugar plant. The entire area surrounding the coal fields at Konin and surrounding Goslawice is still without electricity. In several places, electricity is received from local flour mills (as, for instance, in Slasin, Sepolno, Kleczew and Kazimierz). This electrical power is, of course, supplied only for official installations and enterprises during their hours of operation. On Saturday evenings and Sundays, even these establishments are in complete darkness.

Labor

"The entire plant works on three shifts. Coal miners come by special buses, even from such distant locations as Sepolno. Through the present time, no SP (Youth Worker Brigades) or compulsory labor brigades have been employed here. Furthermore, no military labor units are working in the enterprise yet. However, there are rumors that with the enlargement of the working area and further specialization, such brigades - free or compulsory - will be put to work in the enterprise this year [1953].

Other Industries

"The extension of the coal fields, the construction of a chemical department in the briquet factory and the construction of a huge power plant has had up to now no direct influence on the industrialization of the adjacent area. Not one larger factory has yet been constructed in this area. Only old pre-war plants - rather limited in size - are in operation, as, for instance, a sugar factory in Goslawice, a brick factory south of Gocelnia and a brewery near Wonsosa. Even in Konin, which is a district town, no special industrialization could be observed. In this small town which was twice very badly damaged during the last war (in 1939 and 1944) no industrial investments of any kind have been made till now. The town itself was only partly rebuilt and partly cleared of rubble. Last spring [1953], new destruction was caused by floods. The largest enterprise in the town is a brewery, which is now somewhat expanded in comparison with pre-war times.

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"Some fishing was in operation before the war on the close-by lakes. Now, after the trend of nationalization, fishing activities have also sunk to a minimum. As individual fishers are obliged to supply the state with very high quotas of their catch, it no longer pays to be in the fishing field."

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